STUDY OF ISLAM

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THE FAITH

Amanto billahi wa malaikatihi wa kutubihi wa rusulihi walyaumil-akhiri walqadri khairihi wa sharrihi minallahi t'ala wal b'as b'adilmaut.

"I have faith in Allah, and His angels, on His Books (Revelations), on His Apostles and on the Hereafter, and on this, that all measures of good and evil are from God, and on the Resurrection."

THESE seven items form the seven articles of Faith in Islam, the rejection of any of which would be fatal to one's belief in Islam. It might be particularly noted that none of these cardinals share the character of a dogma. They are, on the other hand, the aggregate of those verities which furnish the very motor power of a Muslim's life, by which he translates these exalted principles into actions. The word *Amanto* in the text which I translate "I have faith" is derived from the word *I'man* which does not only mean faith or belief, but belief shown by action. The word *Islam*, no doubt, conveys the idea of accepting a certain principle as the Truth, but when this truth is actually fulfilled, then it becomes *I'man*. The above quoted formula therefore signifies that a Muslim

should be directed and controlled in his daily life and business by these seven cardinals. Before I say anything explanatory of the Muslim Faith, let me tell you that the principles enunciated in it are so wide and comprehensive as to include nearly every word or deed of man, whether he be a Muslim or a non-Muslim, a believer in the existence of Deity or otherwise, so long as he regards himself a proper member of the Society and stands to it in a certain relation of responsibility.

MEASURES OF GOOD AND EVIL.

A careful study of the wide expanse of nature reveals to us the fact that nothing in itself is bad; it is its use in particular measure or under particular circumtances which makes it so. The same thing in one proportion may prove to be invaluable, while in another harmful. The same action under a given circumstance may become the source of blessing, while under other circumstances may be a a curse to the doer and to his fellow men. This is the great universal law from the operation of which nothing is exempt. Here is an illustration in

point. The use of opium in certain cases may save a sufferer, from excruciating pain but if taken without need its effect would be nothing but fatal. The same applies to every phase in the evolution of the whole universe. These diverse results are but different phenomena of the same thing, only their diversity is due to the difference in proportions. Two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen make one molecule of water; likewise, another combination of them in a different proportion will make another material form.

This law applies not only to matter, but holds good in morals and spiritualities as well. Al-Qur-an was the first in initiating us into the mysteries of the workings of this universal law. It showed that the progress of material forms was dependent on the different proportions of the matter. If your quest is to know the intricacies of music, you must find access to them only through the diverse grades of sounds which compose the rhythm. Human speech, too, is regulated in this way, as also are our actions, whether good or bad. The "Shariat,"

which in Muslim terminology stands for "The Commandments," are moral laws that prescribe the same rules of limit. It is due to this alone that in Al-Qur-an injunctions and ordinances of Islamic ethics are termed "Hudud Allah," the "limits of God."

BELIEFS.

According to the teachings of Islam, the Being who prescribes these limits and measures of good and evil in everything is God, Who is the Supreme Creator, and knows the ultimate purpose of every created object. He is, and can be, the only fountain-head of all law. Being the source of all laws, He causes the results to follow from their operations through His servants, who are known in the language of Islam by the expression, "the angles." Thus our belief in angels follows our belief in the being of God. From a practical point of view, if God is the Source of laws, these beings might be styled as "the functionaries of law," through whom the Supreme Deity makes His will known to His creatures. The revelation of the law to man, according to Muslim belief, has not

been confined to a certain time or to a particular people, but has been in existence ever since the first creation. The compendiums in which these laws are laid down are known as the Books of Allah. The Muslims, after owing their allegiance to God, give full submission to the Gospels of God. Our belief regarding the person, the messenger, to whom the task of conveying the Gospel of God to His creatures on earth is entrusted, is this, that the Giver of the Gospel chooses the very best from amongst the best of His creatures for the purpose, who receives his message through the agency of angels. But the messenger testifies to the truth of his message in the first place by acting upon them himself. His life, therefore, is a commentary on the Gospel which he receives. He hands over his Gospel in the form of a book to the generation amongst whom he lives. As pointed out above, this receiving of the Divine Gospel is not the exclusive privilege of a particular community, creed, or period in the life of humankind. The need for a new dispensation is felt as soon as the existing code is despoiled by the hands of

man, either lost in substance, or forgotten in its teachings, or becomes mixed with alloy through other than Divine designs. The new dispensation consequently is only the old dispensation presented in a new garb suiting the changed circumstances of the age in which it is revealed. This leads us to believe, after believing in Deity, in angels, and in Divine messages, in all the numerous apostles of God, and we owe respect and homage to all of them alike. So that our belief in all of these four principles of Faith is only another way of our believing in the laws of eternal verities.*

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*With reference to above please read the following verses of Al-Qur-an, which substantiate the foregoing statements :—

" Qúlú ámanná, billáhi wa má unzila ilainá, wa má unzila ilá Ibráhima wa Ismá íla wa Isháqa wa Ya'qúba wal asbáti wa má útiya Musá wa Isá wa má útiyannabíyyúna min Rabbihim lá nufarriqu bainaahadin minhum wa nahnu lahú muslimún."

(O ye Muslims !) Say that we believe in God, and all that He sent down on us, and all that He sent down on Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob and their descendants. We believe in all that He gave unto Moses, Jesus, and other apostles from their Lord. No distinction we make between the apostles (of Allah), and we submit to God.

And it is subject to these verities that our actions partake of the nature of good or evil. It must be noted that all our present-activities are inspired by our ideas of what their results are to be for us in the future. If only the present is our concern there will be no hindrance against evil nor any inducement for good. Nay, the good and evil of things can only be judged through subsequent result. Thus future rules our present. Without my belief in future there would be no inducement or hindrance on me for or against doing anything so long as I managed to conceal its consequences or the nature of my acts from others. But, on the other hand, when I am overwhelmingly impressed with the influence which my present is to exercise on my future, then it is the hope or the fear of the future which will control the activites of my life. Whether the future is to affect just a small period of my future or the whole of it, my due recognition of it is a great impetus to me for good and wholesome activities. Moreover, even in the social structure of mankind no rule would be worthy of respect or obedience

if the individual member was not held responsible for any consequences that might arise out of its non-observance. Our belief in the reward that follows law-abidingness and the penalty of the breach of the rule are the very wheels on which the vehicle of society moves. Consequently a Muslim's belief in the hereafter is the inevitable outcome of his belief in the aforementioned four cardinals—the Source of the Law (Allah), the functionaries of the Law (the angels), the compendiums of the Law (Books of God), and the Prophets, to whom the Law came for others.

The next question arises as to the nature of the Law, which is Divine. As I said before, it is absolutely the proportions in which the elements of a certain object or an idea are constituted that make it good or bad, beneficial or baneful. The law which regulates the constitution of these proportions is inexorable, for it is eternally fixed according to a superhuman plan. It is this essential characteristic of the Divine laws which makes them worthy of being readily obeyed, for they are constituted in measures

whose mathematical precision could never be excelled. Greater our faith in this infallibility, swiftness, precision of these measures, the wider and more genuine would be our observance of them. My knowledge and ready belief in the fact that the use of a certain proportion of arsenic destroys animal life is the only effectual deterrent against its injudicious use. A Muslim must therefore recognize in God the original planner of these measures which render things fit or harmful according as the case may be. Religion, in fact, came to man to reveal to him the very knowledge of these measures of good or bad in things concerned. Ignorant people have sought in this fact the source of the so-called fatalism which they associate with the teachings of Islam, while, as a matter of fact, the idea involves every element of progress if viewed in a correct perspective. The belief in this principle therefore constitutes the sixth article of a Muslim's Faith. We Muslims believe in the hereafter, as said before, and believe also that we are to be held responsible for every word spoken and every act done,

according as they are good or bad. The belief in this great rule is extremely essential in order to create in us a spirit of moral responsibility and orderliness. If it were our belief that the workings of the results of all our actions ceased with our life, then there would be nothing to check us from evil ways so long as we had influence, power, or resources behind us to protect us from their penalties or the censure of the society. But if we believe that everything said or done lives, and even though we cease to live we would be led in the presence of One with whom lay all power of meting out reward or punishment, and that nothing, good or bad, was lost, then the extent to which this idea would be found to regulate and control our present and future may easily be imagined. This is the seventh and the last pillar which supports the glorious structure of the Faith of Islam. Let me recite to you all of these seven in one breath : " I believe in Allah (Who is the fountain-head of all law); I believe in angels (His agents, who conveyed His will to His messengers) ; I believe in His Gospels (which

embody the law); I believe in His apostles (unto whom is manifested the law); I believe in the hereafter; I believe in this that all measures of good or bad are designed by Him; I believe in my resurrection after death (when I will have to answer for my acts)."

YOU ARE ALL MUSLIMS.

Now if all of you believe in a religion which looks upon God as a being who teaches His Gospels, His messages, which are sent down for our guidance, and that our existence is continuous, even though we pass out of this mortal state, then pray tell me how your belief is not that of Islam? What right have you to acknowledge the teachers and apostles of your own tribe as from God and not those of others? You or your ancestors did not stand to God in any special relation. Allah is the God of all and equally. If He sent a guide for you, there is no reason why he should not send another to me. Moreever, when the books that He sent down previously did not remain in their original purity—a fact which is undisputed about almost all the books—He sent down His

last great message, the Al-Qur-an, and His last great m-ssenger, Holy Muhammad (peace be upon him !) One who believes in the apostles of God cannot help believing in Al-Qur-an and in the Holy Prophet Muhammad.

If the prophet you believe in brought you a message, which was left to you in his words and actions, and if you to-day do not possess any genuine record of these sacred actions and words, should God leave you without guidance and suffer you to grope in the darkness ? If He sent you guidance once, He must send you again. You have got no genuine record of any excepting that of Muhammad and the Qur-an. Accept them if you will. Otherwise you cannot logically and rationally believe in your own Faith.

I have one more question to ask of those who do not identify themselves with any religion : Can they disclaim any of these seven cardinal principles ? If they are members of a society and being instinctively law-abiding cannot deny the existence of the laws of that society. Whether it is Moses who instructs me

through the Commandments not to tell a falsehood, nor to steal or covet the belongings of others, or I have made an understanding with my neighbour not to do the same, it is immaterial, as without it society cannot exist. Either way I have agreed to obey a law. This law has a source which you choose to designate the sovereign political authority; there are functionaries of law which you style as police, judiciary, etc. Our designation for them is the angels. You possess a code of law, so we have, which we call the Qur-an, or other sacred books. The will of the sovereign political authority is made known in the first place to a chosen few: in your nomenclature they are called ministers of the sovereign will; with us they are the apostles of God. The observance of the law and its breach must have their reward and punishment, otherwise the law becomes a dead letter. This necessitates our belief in the hereafter and the Day of Judgment which constitute the fifth and seventh principles of Muslim faith. Then as to the nature of the law. It only enjoins certain limits on our actions; it allows

some and disallows others. The former it treats as good action and the latter as bad. But the limit comes from sovereign political authority. Hence the sixth article of Muslim Faith, good or evil measures of things from God. You may not believe in religion, but if you wish to live in human society you must subscribe to these seven articles of Faith. Thus the seven principles of faith in Islam do converge on the basic principles of human polity in every form of society. Believe in God and in His dispensation of the Law and you are Muslims. This is true religion. Everything else is myth and remnant of pagan belief.

RELIGIOUS LAWS AND LEGALISM.

The word "law," however, creates misapprehension in some minds. They may submit to its rules, they say, in matters mundane, but they cannot give countenance to it in things sacred. In every other walk of life they do observe limits, but in religion they treat it as an accursed patrimony. But they really labour under a misconception of religion. If religion brings good tidings of some sort of happiness in

the hereafter, does that consist in some "unbridled enjoyment"? Are we looking for the day when all checks will be taken off from our desires and we will have "a nice time of it"? Even a libertine feels tired of his intemperate pursuits. Intemperance only means going beyond limits. Happiness and misery have the same constituents, with the difference, of course, in degrees and measures. Happiness means enjoyment within limits. Besides, the word "laws" in religious phraseology should not be confused with red-tape legalism. It only another name for limits to regulate and guide our faculties to their proper fruitions. If spirituality—our asset in the hereafter—evolves out of morality, the latter mainly consists in bringing our natural passions and impulses within desirable boundaries. This delimitation of passion and morals in religion means laws and commandment.

Islam, in the literal sense of the word and the one given to it by Al-Qur-an, the sacred book of Islam, means complete submission to the law; and if Nature, taken with all its

workings and manifestations as a faithful index to the will of that "Great intelligence" or "Infinite Eternal Energy," as Herbert Spencer says, "from which all things proceed" may safely be relied upon by us as the best guide in adopting a religion or code of life for ourselves, it cannot recommend any course other than Islam to the human mind *i.e.* submission to the law. Even a superficial observer of Nature connot help seeing the most implicit obedience and submission to certain unchangeable prescribed laws observed by every atom in Nature. Nay, the very existence of the various components of Nature and their reciprocal use and service to one another, which is solely responsible for the harmonious and beneficial working of the whole universe, exclusively depend upon their strict observance of the said laws. Imagine a momentary violation of the prescribed course by an insignificant atom, and the ultimate destruction of the whole fabric of the universe is a necessary consequence. Look at the sun, the moon, the stars, the day, the

night, the seasons, the trees, the ocean, etc., they all have their respective prescribed courses, which they scrupulously observe, and there is no day in the whole history of the world when any transgression occurred This is what Islam literally means; and the Book of God, the Qur-án, which for elucidating the truths it inculcates always counts upon Nature, the work of God, as a testimony to His words, in this case also, to expound Islam refers in the most realistic way to what I have just said; thus bringing home to us the necessity of adopting the Islamic, that is submissive, attitude towards the law of God, and warning us against our assuming the reverse course. The text goes thus :—

Ian addina indallahilislam.....afa ghaira dinallahi yabghoona wa lahu aslama man fissamawati walarde tauan wa karhan wa ilaihi yar ji'oon..... Wash-shamsu tajri le mustaqarrin laha, zalika taqdir ul-Azeez-el-Aleem. Walqamara qaddarnaha manazela hatta 'áda kal-'urjoon-el-qadeem; lash-shamsu yanbaghi laha an tudrikal qamara walallailu sabiqu-n-

nahar; Kullun fi falakin yasbahoon .....Wa man yabtaghe ghair-el-Islama deenan fa lan yuqbalo minho wa howa fil akhirate minal khasereen.

TRANSLATION

"Verily Islam (submission to the laws of God) is the religion of God .. Do they desire any other religion than that of God? To Him doth everything that is in the Heaven and in the earth submit in willing or forced obedience, and to Him do they return ..... Look to the sun, which with all her system is going to its place of rest; this is the ordinance of the Mighty, the Knowing. And for the moon We have decreed stations for it till it changes like an old and crooked palm branch. To the sun it is not given to overtake the moon, nor doth the night outstrip the day, but each in its course doth journey on" (xxxvi. 35-40).

CHRIST—A MUSLIM.

By nature we are capable of observing the law, and this is the basic principle of Islam which differentiates it from the received form of Christianity, because Jesus never taught the dogmatic doctrines taught by his Church which

regards the law as curse under the teaching of St. Paul. Jesus himself was a true Musulman, and literally taught Islam in most unequivocal terms when he said to his disciples :—

" Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets ; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

" For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

" Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven ; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven " (Sermon on the Mount).

That we cannot dispense with the law is a truism Lawlessness was never an enviable thing in any province of life, religious or mundane. In Islamic religious sense of the word, law means definition of the limits and their observance in the use of things created to give furtherance to the ends of humanity.

BELIEF IN GOD AND THE HEREAFTER.

No human polity can work to its proper end without our belief in God. Is not the human heart the only fountain-head of human actions? Are not motives lurking in our breasts solely responsible for all our doings? Does not regulation of action depend upon regulation of mind? Purity of action undoubtedly comes from purity of heart, and evil feelings generate evil actions. Your functionaries in the police department may keep a most vigilant eye on your intentions as read through your actions. Can they pry into your heart? Can they watch the working of your mind? It is impossible, and therefore you need one who may read what lurks in your breast—'*Aleemun bizatissadoor*—one who knows your breast, as the Qur-án says, in order to make your heart a pure fountain-head of good actions. Again, is not evasion of detection chiefly responsible for the continuation of crime? Is not avoidance of police observation, and therefore seclusion, often sought by the criminals in order to do their malpractices? Have you arranged an

ever-watchful eye on a people's doings? No, you cannot, unless your sovereign authority possesses the attribute of omnipresence.

Again, if suppression of crime to a great extent depends upon having all offences punished, do not hundreds and thousands of culprits remain unpunished? Can you bring all of them within the meshes of the law? No, you cannot. And what about punishing those who died immediately after commission of some offence? Therefore, if punishment is to be deterrent, your polity is incomplete unless it provides also to punish those who remain unpunished in the present life. Therefore, in order to make the polity of an orgainsed society complete, your sovereign authority must possess omnipresence, omniscience, and power to read the secrets of the heart, besides other attributes. And to make your institution of punishment deterrent in its effect, judgment after death on actions unrequited in this life is essential.

Islam did not come to give you certain dogmatic tenets, without knowing which the world was not a whit the loser, before they

were enunciated; neither it saddles you with certain ceremonials. Islam is a perfect code of life to regulate your daily conduct and make you a useful citizen of the world. It gives you certain principles to guide your life and enjoins upon you certain practices to bring those principles into actions. Like the Church religion, it does not teach you to disregard present life in the interest of one to come. Nay, it bases the happiness or misery of the coming life upon your present actions. "One who is blind in this world," as the Qur-án says, "shall remain so in the coming life," speaks volumes, of making your actions as actions of a right-minded man.

FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM

Islam—Peace and Way to Peace.

To create Muslim spirit in his followers, the Prophet of Islam lays down the grand superstructure of his faith on five pillars: the formula of the Faith (Kalima Tayyiba), Prayers, Fasting, Almsgiving, and Pilgrimage.

Islam, as it literally signifies, is a religion of peace, and through these above-noted five principles it has tried to establish peace in the world and the hereafter, which only can be the goal of a religion from God.

Various rules have been laid down by different religious systems of the world for the attainment of the above object, but the religion which has been expounded by Muhammad (peace be upon him !), glories in the fact that it sets human reason as the test of its beneficence. The following looks very impressive and fascinating—in words—"Blessed are they who are peacemakers !" But just to say so is one thing, and to plan and scheme out ways and means whereby peace and fellowship may become the practical rule of human life is another. Islam gives due

weight to human nature when it attempts to solve those difficulties which hamper the growth of any useful institution in the world. Accordingly, if we desire to secure peace, we must in the first place contemplate those circumstances which destroy it. Wars, private or national rivalries, and crimes are but the synonyms of disorder and the absence of peace.

THE PROBLEM OF "THINE AND MINE"

All of them have sprung from a common source, the one perennial root-cause, *viz*, "This is thine, and that is mine." The successive stages in the life of a family would perhaps furnish a very fitting illustration of my theme. There is a time up to which all the children in a family represent the various parts of one body politic (family). The parents look to all their needs, and the affection they have one to the other is common bond which unites them into one single whole. But the solidarity of this whole begins to be a little shaken when this passion for "thine and mine" begins to find expression—however feebly—in their little acts and words. This is the beginning of what

cause disintegration in the midst of not one family, but a larger social unit as well, *viz*, a nation or a community, and its still larger prototype, the whole human race. The wars of one nation against another only represent on a very large scale the petty jealousy between one member of a family against another. The self-same motive of "thine and mine" being responsible everywhere.

Similarly we find this idea of "thine and mine" as the chief incentive to all civil crimes. We wish to possess the belongings of others by questionable means, and it leads to crime. Usurpation, theft, fraud are only different forms of unfair means, which we use to convert "thine" into "mine" in a wrong way. Let us enlarge our view-point and study the act of a whole nation in this light. We should find that the real aim of all wars and international rivalries lies in the motive of the rapacity of one to dispossess the other of a tempting prize, which may be a large piece of unexploi ed land, some trading interest, or any other similar object. However insignificant this source of temptation,

the devastation and bloodshed which results from them is often appalling Consequently the first concern of an institution aiming at the establishment of peace in the world should, in the first place, be to attempt most seriously to solve this problem of "thine and mine." For where we find this motive of "thine and mine" in its abnormal aspects giving rise to qu rrels and wars, we find it also the fountain-head of all our good activities. It is both a blessing and a curse, and the way how it might only be the former, and never the latter, is the duty and province of the religion from God to discover and expound. This idea of "thine and mine" is not altogether valueless. It creates, as a matter of fact, that instinct which makes people active in the hope that the reward of these activities would be theirs. If there were any law by which the price of John's labour could be handed over to James, the end of civilization would not be difficult to see. Any attempt to do away entirely with this personal motive of "thine and mine" would be a failure. Those who have tried to do so have miserably failed

in their efforts. They denude men from the very incentive to action. This unnatural phase of Socialism has proved to be its grave in the West. We read the same about Jesus Christ. He was a true prophet of God. He believed and tried to preach that all the bloodshed in the world was entirely due to the presence of the idea of "thine and mine." But he did not succeed in his mission. The age, perhaps, was too sordid to receive his message. He was taken to be a seditionist by his own men and a violator of the *status quo*. Candidly speaking if what we find in the New Testament be taken as a genuine record of Jesus, his compatriots were not to be blamed too much if they could not see their way to endorse the visionary view of the dreamer. Leave apart others ; will those who have undertaken to shepherd his flock care to act upon his following views ?

"And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither have two coats apiece "

" And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart."

"And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them."—ST. LUKE ix. 3—5.

The prime need of the world is not the ideal in its abstract form, but it is, on the other hand, the laying down of such practical rules and guidances—a course of life-discipline which may enable us to read abstract ideas in the terms of actualities. The work of a reformer or preacher should not end at "Blessed-are-those-who-are-peacemakers," but should advance into the realm of practicalities and soar into regions of realities. It should definitely direct how this peace is to be made and the peace-making psychology created. That this highly personal motive "thine and mine" be allowed to work within desirable limits, and a rule of actual practice be brought into existence, it is desirable that practical ways be suggested which would regulate the activities of human life. Instead of bringing about equilibrium in the possession of individuals by means of force, it would be much better to inspire them with

the spirit of charity and self-sacrifice. To deprive people of the fruits of their honest labour would not only be unnatural and preposterous, but freeze as well the very spirit of energy and bring the wheel of civilization to immobility. The world would be more prosperous and peaceful, too, if all were allowed to reap fully the benefits of their work, with a strong sense created in them to part voluntarily with their earnings in relief of distress and misery. This will chasten the evil aspect of the spirit "thine and mine" into a blessing.

This was a big problem, and the Last of the Prophets came to solve it. He lays down through these five pillars of Islam a course of life which without killing the instinct of "thine and mine"—the sum-total of human consciousness—atrophies its evil consequences.

Nothing would deter us from giving up our all for the sake, and to win the goodwill of our object of adoration. Islam points that object to be Allah and it expects its votaries to stint nothing in all that they possess to win the goodwill of One who is the Best, the Holie

and in every respect most fit to be the object of every true human devotion. "By no means shall you attain to righteousness until you spend (benevolently) out of what you love"—so says the Qur-án.

Let me now show you a few of those things we love and for the achievement of which this guiding motive of "thine and mine" becomes a source of disaster rather than that of bliss for men, and makes them authors of limitless evil and harm. Money, as we all know, is the great token of exchange for everything in the world, and is obtained by spending one's time in the best possible manner. Time itself means money. We need time to accomplish all great purposes. None of our great national triumphs would be realized until we spend our time freely in their pursuit. Next after time come those means which satisfy our physical hunger; the provisions which sustain life, and keep the vigours of life alive in us. After these are the needs of our body in the way of apparel. Next in the upward scale is our want of conjugal life. We are animals, though rational, and our natural state

of life after we are grown up demands a reasonable satisfaction of our human instincts which directs us to find in a conjugal life the best form of a happy and contented life ; as a necessary corollary to the last mentioned is our need of finding means to successfully bring up our children and to provide all that is needful for their future happiness in life. The last great object of our attachment and devotion is our nation and the country to which we belong. All of these more or less directly move our activities in life, and become useful or harmful to other fellow men according to the degree and interest with which they are served. The passion for our country, as for instance, which we designate patriotism, has always been the cause of immense blood-spilling and ruin when it began to work beyond the limit of self-determination. Let it not follow from this that the love of one's self, one's belongings, one's wife and children, and of one's country, are nothing but evil. Far from it. On the other hand, man being a social creature depends for his well-ordered and progressive existence on these essential main-

springs of his activities. The harm lies in his attachment to these interests to such a degree as would lead him to trample on the rights of others. A religion under which the rich man is confronted with the insuperable difficulty of making the camel pass through the eye of the needle before he can enter the kingdom of Heaven has never appealed to humanity. It would cause inertia and lethargy as it did in the days of the Middle Ages. We need a religion from God which may create the happy means and save us from the disasters of going to extremes. Religion without such solution is myth and fable and of no consequence to mankind. Mere belief in certain events in the history of the world is only fetishism in different forms.

A true religion would create in us a spirit which if on the one hand would induce us to be ever-active in winning riches of life, it on the other would also make us ready to part with them in making others happy. It should create in us a spirit of self-sacrifice—making it meritorious in our eyes to spend our earnings

in the interest of the others. Man is a worshipping animal. He has always adored the Unseen, and has ever been ready to give up everything near and dear to him to please the Deity. Islam has on the one hand, therefore, prescribed a course of discipline under which a Muslim would learn to give up his time, his wealth, his eatables and drinks, and his family and country attachments in the way of God, and on the other hand the religion of God impresses on the minds of its votaries that the cause of Allah is another name for the cause of humanity.

PRAYERS.

In the first place, Islam enjoins upon me to abandon all my worldly occupations, however absorbing they be, at the time of offering my devotion and my duty to my Lord. I am commanded to rise very early in the morning, and after making proper ablutions to stand in the Holy Presence of my Maker. Similarly I am commanded to repeat these exercises five times a day, in order that they may serve as constant reminders to me of my duty to spend my time in interests other than mine. If these holy, self-

less, and pious activities so many times a day become the regular course of my life, it would not be a difficult thing for me to spend my time to help the happiness of others at the interest of my own business.

Fasting.

In reality Islam has, through its rational teachings, induced its followers not only to abandon what is unlawful to them, but even to give up what otherwise rightfully belongs to them in the hope that it may tend to the welfare and happiness of others. For one who has become accustomed under the inspiration of Islam to take such a view of his relations to his mundane connections and belongings, it is never difficult to manifest a spirit of utter self-sacrifice in the cause of the Lord. For how utterly impossible it becomes for a man to acquire by foul means what he would cheerfully give up for the service of others, though his own by all laws of justice and equity. Here is the way how Islam meets and provides for the case. It is quite admissible for one to eat and drink according to his means, but when we see that this same eating and

drinking is given up for some time by a man through fear of nobody except for the love of God, then certainly it would be too hard for him to even over-indulge in it under ordinary circumstances. Likewise one has every right to enjoy the company and society of one's wife, but when he gives it up within prescribed time during the month of Ramadan, without any compulsion, he truly has developed his character to the extent of not even casting a lustful glance on any other woman in ordinary times. Prayer and fasting therefore are the first rungs on the ladder by which a Muslim climbs higher and higher. Pass your eye down all the 90 per cent of the crimes which darken our society, and you will surely find a cure for all of them in the simple expression spoken by Holy Muhammad, who says : " If people would become responsible as to the right use of what lies between their lips and their feet, I stand responsible for their entry into Paradise." Islam prescribes the cure for this in fasting, which does not aim merely at this that we should torture our body, but that we should cultivate

the habit of disallowing to ourselves the pleasures that are not ours, by disallowing to ourselves for the love of God those that are rightfully ours.

The Holy Month of Ramadan under lunar system, is the fasting month with Muslims. The month is held in veneration by the Muslims the world over, and they observe fasting on all of its days. But the observance of keeping fasts is not peculiar to Muslims alone. Nearly all the great religions of the world have laid down this ordinance in one form or another, and in our own days there is a growing body of men who, although definitely uninterested in any religion, do recognize the wisdom and advantage of this practice. The peculiarity of Islam lies in this, that where it always presents all such of its features as are common to it and other religions in a highly purified and correct form, it has also laid down rules and regulations for the observance of fasting which clearly distinguish it from a mere ordeal of starving. These rules and regulations make it one of the most wonderful and ethical institu-

tions that are yet known to men. The commencement of the Holy Month introduces in the Muslim world a visible change in their daily life. So far as the rules about the hours of partaking food go, a Muslim—after the new moon has risen—would take a breakfast before the dawn of the next morning, and would abstain from taking anything till the sunset time of the day, and this course would be followed so long as the lunar month lasts. This feature of Islamic fasting is seemingly common to this institution in other religions, although there are some according to whom the abstention from, or the partaking of, certain foods constitutes alone the observance. The same do help themselves to fruits, their juice, and some other similar refreshments. Islamic fasting, however, is an absolute and total abstention from taking anything to eat or drink. Islam, besides, prescribes injunctions which distinguish it from mere starvation. The Holy Preceptor of Islam has frequently said that mere abstention from food and drinks does not unveil the real significance of Islamic fasting. The verses of Al-Qur-án

which convey the injunction are explicit and to the point in their statement, which make it an institution for the improvement of the moral and spiritual condition of man.

In order to lay down the best course of escaping evil, Islam expects its followers to even abstain from those things during the month of Ramadan the use of which would be permissible to him at other times as I have said above; and all this in the name of God of Mercy and Greatness. This indirectly enables him to practise in a very effective way the resistance to evil inclinations when he is capable of abstaining from all lawful indulgence during this month. During the time of fasting one has to give up all those connections which arise out of one's matrimonial state, as well as to resist every expression of the carnal instinct in man or woman. So that Islamic fasting does not merely mean the fasting of one's organs of receiving food, but also the fasting of eyes, ears, lips, etc. It constitutes the strict non-indulgence in any

physical gratifications. According to the ways of the Holy Prophet, an observer of it should not merely keep his organs of doing and feeling from unlawful indulgence, but should on the other hand employ them in doing meritorious acts. One who fasts and cannot keep his eyes from casting lustful looks is not at all observing the rule. Likewise one who hears foul language or speaks it, or one whose limbs and organs move in unholiness, commits wrong and violates the sanctity of fasting. Islam puts a ban on evil thoughts and reflections. Islam expects its followers to develop to their fullest limit all those faculties in them which are noble and good ; that is why the Holy Prophet, besides his habitual benevolence of disposition, was even more generous during the days of the Ramadan. He was foremost of all in giving with a free hand out of what he had. The Qur-án prescribes the same mode for the suppression of a passion like anger in man :—

" Wal kazimin alghaiz, wal 'afin anannas, wallaho yuhibbul muhsinin."

"The true believer is he who controls his anger and forgives peoples. Verily Allah loves those who are benefators of their fellow-men."

As a matter of fact, all our passions arise from our different natural appetites, and can never be killed; but, directed in the right channels, they will become assets of incalculable value to humanity. This is the reason why the Holy Book has enjoined upon every man not only to control his anger but also to exercise a little extra generosity towards one who had been the cause of it; and to do so, particularly when a Muslim is fasting, constitutes a part of his observance of the ordinance. He should, morever, be bountiful in freely ministering out of his possessions to the wants of others. The exercise of all other noble qualities in the fasting month is especially recommended. A month thus spent in charity and abstemiousness would never fail to yield the best of results for the rest of the year. This fact holds good in regard to every other quality in man. Besides, if the eagerness to do the opposite of

bad to the highest degree can create high order of morality, observance to a course of discipline like the Muslim fasting could never fail to build an enduring character in him for a whole lifetime.

Unfortunately injunctions like fasting have always been regarded in the Christian world as systems of mortification and penance—a necessary part, as they think, of the Old Covenant. To them such institutions therefore seem to be just ordinances descending upon ordinary mortals in the garb of religion from an all-powerful autocrat who takes delight in making his creatures suffer. And since according to Church theology man was incapable of bearing the burden of this heavy task—"the law," the latter became a source of malediction to him—Jesus came to relieve humanity from its baneful effect. A supreme penalty was paid to the Task Master—to relieve us from all kinds of penances and mortifications. A new covenant was entered into and "the Blood" placed a seal of confirmation on it.

What a misnomer of theology and a puerile and trite conception of religion! The real function of religion is the reform of our morals, and if the observance of fasting, such as is laid down by Islam, can and does promote this reform, can any atonement or intercession absolve us from the necessity of observing it? Islamic fasting happily is neither a mortification nor a course of wicked starvation. It is far from being that over which an imperious tyrant gloats. It does not atone for any sin, nor has it anything to do with a painful incident. It is only a means, and a potent means, for the reform of our morals and the best ethical ideal for one to strive for. Does it not, as we all know, furnish the best weapon to fight out any lack of patience or perseverance? If we regard resolution of purpose as the highest moral quality in man, then it is the chief function of every correct system of religion, not only to hold up this quality in our esteem, but also to lay down the mode of its acquisition. Islam did not content itself to say that humility and gentleness are the best of virtues, but has laid down rules

how these could be possessed and exercised. It has placed fasting among such modes. One of the sayings of the Holy Prophet reads :—

"Assaumo nisfus sabr."

(Fasting is half-patience).

How can one deny the value of fasting, even, though its definition was reduced to mere abstention from food and drinks between certain hours? We are very well acquainted with the physical helplessness and total dependence on medical aid of those to whom the *summum bonum* of life is eating and leading an easy life. To them a course of fasting would be what an elixir of life is to the dying. Besides, rich foods and drinks in a glutton give rise to all those base passions to which a man of abstemious habits would be a stranger. Evil deeds hardly fit in well with a hungered body. If the above is undoubtedly true, is it not more than the truth that during the month of fasting all doors are closed upon Satan, as the Noble Prophet remarked ?

Muslims' Life during Ramadan.

It has been pointed out that we have not only to shun evil during Ramadan, but also to exercise our faculties of generosity and benevolence to our utmost capacity. That is why in Islamic countries ordinary business is a little less attended to during these days than in others. It is therefore a universal wish to save out of a year's earnings for use during this Holy Month. An unusual social and moral atmosphere is the visible feature of this month. Hearts move towards piety and goodness as if by instinct. After usual night prayer there is another prayer known as the "Taraveeh" prayer. This prayer is in fact the substitute of midnight prayer. "Tahajjad," or midnight prayer, is the sixth prayer. which is not obligatory, and is said between 1 a.m. and early dawn by the pious. But during Ramadan its observance becomes essential for all. After breaking their fasts, and having taken their suppers, the Muslims leave their houses and come to the mosques to pass most of the night in

prayer, but as the place of worship becomes crowded with the votaries one of them assumes the duties of Imam.* while others follow him in prayers. He recites the Qur-án in an audible tone and arranges to finish the whole of it within the month, This prayer of Taraveeh consists of twenty Rakaat, which ordinarily take some three hours to finish. Then they go to their homes and retire to rest, but leave their beds again some two or three hours before the dawn. Some of the Muslims prefer to say their Tahajjad—midnight prayer—in place of Taraveeh at this time. Then some breakfast is taken. This over, the morning prayer is said. A brief nap is taken by some after they have said their morning prayer, to make up for the want of rest which long hours of waking during the night might have caused. The normal business is resumed. All those for whom the suspension of their business in the month is possible—and Muslims mostly take care to save something in eleven months to enable them to

*One who leads the prayer.

dispense with their work in this month–generally resort during the day and the night to devotional places; there they do reading from the Qur-án, if by themselves, or busy themselves with religious and prayer exercises and study works on morals, ethics, etc The mosques are generally very crowded during these days, which remain open day and night with the exception of a few hours at night-time; but what is most conspicuous is the fact that the spectre of the want of the daily necessaries of life is banished from the land. This is due entirely to the fact that rich and poor are all eager to be helpful and sympathetic to those who need this kind of assistance and charity. Good-fellowship, conscientiousness, and devotion become the order of the day. Even the most indigent in the society find plentiful help from the charity of their more blessed neighbours. Those in the West, who are beginning to recognize now that silence and contemplation too play no small part in the achievement of human enfoldment, would do well to note the truth of the above in Islamic

countries, especially during the month of Ramadan.

Laila-tul-Qadr—The Most Sacred Night of the Year.

It is one of the popular traditional beliefs amongst Muslims that one of the last ten nights of the month of Ramadan is one for the fulfilment of human prayers and supplications. This particular night has not been very definitely distinguished from the other nine, but the experience of those who have been blessed with these most propitious moments generally goes to fix it as one of the odd nights in the last ten nights of the month. Some regard the 27th or the 29th as the night, although the greater consensus of opinion is in favour of the 27th. Let it not be regarded that this night is all a myth, but is a reality which is fully borne out by the experience of those who had the supreme bliss of witnessing it. The writer of these pages too is not unfamiliar with the inspiring effect of this experience. The Holy Qur-án designates the night as the "Laila-tul-Qadr"—"the

Grand Night," and the hours between the midnight and the early dawn are those of Divine Grace in it. It is generally supposed that it is invariably a clear night, and the sacred moments are attended by a cool breeze and fine drizzling which exhilarates the soul. The pious, deep in his contemplation, finds a strange and indescribable emotion arising out of him. The universe all round him appears to have donned a robe of purity. All of his low desires and carnal passions are dead in him. He finds himself most eager to lay out his heart, his bosom, before the Great Lord; and when he stands before Him in this attitude he finds himself entirely lost in in Him—he feels crushed by a nameless weight which enthralls him, and he is ecstatic. He is oblivious to the posture or the position in which he is, thus wrapped up in his contemplation. Whether he is standing up, or is sitting down, or is in prostration, he is incapable of changing any of these postures. A stream of prayer bursts out of him, like that of a spring, and he feels a melting down all over. When he is in

See page 61.

this state a kind of liquid is emitted by his tongue which is refreshing and sweet. His bosom is unlocked, and there is a feeling of freshness all about him. Although there is no one near him, yet he finds himself overpowered by the assurance that he is in the presence of his God, who is encouraging him to approach Him with his prayer which would be fulfilled. These few remarks describe but partially the most wonderful sensation that a true and devoted seeker experiences during the brief hours of bliss that occur during this night. One would willingly give his whole life for these few moments of true Divine Beatitude which a Muslim, and only a Muslim, can achieve in the said night.

THE BLESSED NIGHT.

In darkest night, in rainy day,
My eyes upon Thy shining face;
With horrid looks when comes dismay
My rock of hope, Thy blessing grace.

Arabic metre Mufaeelum, Mufaeelun, Mufaeelun, Mufaeelun.

Can I forget that "blessed night"
When I was bled with darts of love?
How beatic, how charming sight,
When heart which, flying like a dove,
Began to melt into a cloud
To rise to Thee, in regions high,
Soul wished to leave its earthly shroud
To see the Beauty, eye to eye,
I wish, my Love! if that had been
The final moment of this life,
With joyful heart, with mind serene,
I would have left this earthly strife.

The Words I read in sacred Book,*—
Thou listenest to the one aggrieved.
My Love! come, shine, in gloomy nook
Of heart, that bleeds and feels bereaved.

KHAWAJA.

I'TIKAF.

To obtain this transcendental good fortune there is a religious usage amongst Muslims of contemplation alone and in silence. This is called "I'tikaf." All larger mosques in Muslim

*The Qur-án.

lands have attached to them small cubicles as silence-chambers for the purpose of "I'tikaf." Those who desire to go through this form of devotion during Ramadzan leave their homes on the 21st night and take up their habitat in these cubicles, which they only leave for necessity. Their food, which never exceeds bare subsistence, is brought to them by their people. This meal is taken by them between sunset and dawn. This routine is kept up for ten days between the 20th of Ramadzan and the rising of the next crescent. "I'tikaf" consists of contemplating the attributes of God and a searching inquiry into the votaries' own shortcomings. Their readings of the Qur-án are always done with a serious eye to find the points of agreement and disagreement between their ways and the teaching of the Holy Book. They then earnestly approach the Lord for the right and straight guidance. The life of the Holy Prophet and the teachings of Al-Qur-án are set up by them as ideals, and they pray for being given the courage to reach up to them. The nightly hours are mostly spent in prayers, meditation, and contemplation.

To find the propitious moments of the said sacred night is not the chief aim of the worshipper in I'tikaf. He looks more to have his life in tune with the Universal Spirit, and in the dark hours of the chamber he tries to kindle divine flame in him and receive true illumination. The people of the worshippers receive a special request to minister alms to the poor on their behalf. The above might excite a sceptical smile in this materialistic world, but experience knows the enormous spiritual and moral value of these exercises. It is not a traditional belief, but it is a reality and an experience.

THE 27TH NIGHT OF THE RAMADZAN.

It has been indicated that a special grace attaches to the "Lailat-ul-Qadr" night in Muslim countries, which is generally taken to be the 27th of the month. Those who are not in I'tikaf celebrate it with special celebration: mosques are decorated with taste for the occasion. When the time of breaking fast draws near, worshippers in their hundreds flock to the mosques. Well-to-do people bring light refresh-

ments to mosques. This is a matter of course on all other evenings of the Ramadzan, but the 27th night is observed in a special manner. All in the mosque share the light refreshments taken on the occasion of breaking the fast, and then offer their prayers together. It has been mentioned before that the special prayer which is said after the night prayers is called the "Tarawih," and a portion of Al-Qur-án is recited in it. At some places, however, it is arranged that the whole of the Qur-án is recited by different Imams, and thus this night of 27th is spent. This briefly is a description of the month, which ends by the rising of the crescent of 'Id, which literally means happiness, and is celebrated as a thanksgiving to God for the privilege of having enjoyed the blessings of the Ramadzan and not as an occasion which brought an end to starvation, as the calumniators of Islam in the person of Christian propagandists would suggest. Every Muslim looks forward for the month and the last Friday of Ramadzan is observed with a sense of mourning, as the very name *Jumu'at-ul-Wida* shows—the

Friday of Farewell to Ramadzan. The special feature of this Friday is that almost all the Muslims of cities prefer to say their Friday prayer together in one big mosque, and observe the day as a holiday. We do not know of any occasion in the Christian world corresponding to this month. The Christmas was the happiest occasion to celebrate the advent of one of the most truthful men, who ushered the spirit of righteousness in the world. But the way in which it is celebrated indicates it much more that of a Bacchus worship than the commemoration of the Righteous as he was. It must be confessed that all Muslims do not observe fasting, but then it would be difficult to meet any such who would assume any attitude of irreverence towards it. One would never dare to publicly dishonour its tenets, but would always try to act in as upright a manner as possible. To tell a Muslim of his being with fast, or the month being that of fasts, is the most potent reminder to him of virtue. To say that one is fasting is a sure guarantee of the truth of his speech. From all these statements it is evident what a powerful

institution fasting is for the balance of passions and the development of character.

When Fasting is not Obligatory.

Fasting need not be observed in illness and in travel. This remission, however, might be redeemed at other times. It would be rather difficult to definitely lay down rules to meet all kinds of individual cases. Every man is the best judge of his own conditions, and can know when one is really ill. The easiest way to determine this inability is to follow medical advice, which should clearly say that fasting would do harm. Women with child at the breast, in pregnancy, or during those few days of the month peculiar to their sex, need not also observe it.

In the end I give below those verses of Al-Qur-án which lay down the injunctions with explanations of verses taken from the translation of Al-Qur-án by Maulvi Mohammad Ali. The foot-notes are very useful. They supplement further information which I have not given to avoid repitition.

يا ايها الذين امنو كتب عليكم الصيام كما كتب على الذين من قبلكم لعلكم تتقون-

أيام معدودات-فمن كان منكم مريضاً او على سفر فعدة من ايام اخر - و على الذين يطيقونه فدية طعام مسكين - فمن تطوع خيراً فهو خيرله و ان تصوموا خير لكم ان كنتم تعلمون -

شهر رمضان الذي انزل فيه القران هدى للناس و بينات من الهدى و الفرقان - فمن شهد منكم الشهر فليصمه - و من كان مريضاً او على سفر فعدة من ايام اخر - يريد الله بكم اليسر ولا يريد بكم العسر - ولتكملو العدة و لتكبروا الله على ما هداكم و لعلكم تشكرون -

واذا سالك عبادى عنى فانى قريب - اجيب دعوة الداع اذا دعان فليستجيبو الى وليومنوبى لعلهم يرشدون -

احل لكم ليلة الصيام الرفث الى نسائكم-هن لباس لكم وانتم لباس لهن - علم الله انكم كنتم تختانون انفسكم فتاب عليكم و عفا عنكم-فان باشروهن وابتغوا ما كتب الله لكم وكلو ا واشربو احتى يتبين لكم الخيط الابيض من الخيط الاسود من الفجرثم آتموا الصيام الى اليل - ولا تباشرو هن و انتم عاكفون فى المساجد - تلك حدودالله فلا تقربوها - كذالك يبين الله ايته للناس لعلهم يتقون -

ولا تاكلو اموالكم بينكم بالباطل و تدلوا بها الى لحكام لتاكلو فريقاً من اموال الناس بالاثم و انتم تعلمون -

O you who believe! fasting is prescribed for you, as it was prescribed for those before you, so that you may guard (against evil).*

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*Fasting is a religious institution almost as universal as prayer, and in Islam it is one of the four fundamental practical ordinances, the other three being prayer, poor-rate, and pilgrimage. The words of the Qur-án show that fasting was enjoined on all nations by the prophets who passed before the Holy Prophet Muhammad "Fasting has in all ages and among all nations been an exercise much in use in times of mourning, sorrow, and afflictions" (Cr. Bib. Con.) Fasting has also been in vogue among the Hindus. Even Christians, who think that they have no need of any religious exercise on account of Jesus' atonement, were commanded by that prophet to keep the fasts: "Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance.....But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head and wash thy face" (Matt. 6; 16, 17). Again, when the Pharisees objected to Jesus disciples not keeping the fast as often as John's, his only answer was that when he will be taken away "then shall they fast in those days" (Luke 5: 33-35.)

But Islam has introduced quite a new meaning into the institution of fasting. Before Islam, fasting meant the suffering of some privation in times of mourning and sorrow; in Islam it becomes an institution for the

For a certain number of days † but whoever among you is sick or on a journey,

improvement of the moral and spiritual condition of man. This is plainly stated in the concluding words: *So that you may guard against evil*. The object is that man may learn how he can shun evil, and hence fasting in Islam does not mean simply abstaining from food, but from every kind of evil. In fact, abstention from food is only a step to make a man realize that if he can, in obedience to Divine Injunction, abstain from that which is otherwise lawful, how much more necessary it is that he should abstain from the evil ways which are forbidden by God. All the institutions of Islam are, in fact, practical steps leading to perfect purification of the soul. But along with moral elevation, which is aimed at in fasting another object seems to be hinted at. In fact, the twofold object is that Muslims may be able to guard themselves, *(a) morally* and *spiritually*, against evil, for one who is able to renounce the lawful satisfaction of his desires in obedience to Divine commandments certainly acquires the power to renounce their unlawful gratification; and *(b) physically* against their opponents by habituating themselves to suffer tribulations which they must suffer in defence of Islam and Muslims.

†The number of days is definitely stated in the next verse as being the twenty-nine or thirty days of the month of Ramadzan. For details of fasting see Preface of the Translation of Al-Qur-an by Maulvi Muhammad Ali.

then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days; and those who are able to do it may effect a redemption by feeding a poor man;‡ so whoever does good spontaneously it is better for him; and that you fast is better for you if you know.

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‡The word *fidyah* used in the verse is thus explained by Rgh: *That by means of which a man saves himself, being the wealth which he spends on account of some devotion in which he has fallen short.* The word also indicates *the giving away of property by which freedom of any kind is purchased.* By *those who are able to do it* are meant *those who are able to feed a poor man.* As regards those who cannot keep the fasts on account of constant or long illness, or who are too old or to weak (including in this class the woman who is with child or who gives suck), the practice has been to give away the measure of one man's food to a poor man every day during the whole month (Bkh, AD). Doing good to others is enjoined in addition to fasting in the month of Ramadzan We are told that the Holy Prophet, who was universally recognised for his abundant charity, was most charitable in the month of Ramadzan (Bkh). In its mildest form the injunction is generally observed by giving away the measure of a poor man's feeding at the close of the month, which is called the *sadaqat-ul-fitr*, and which is obligatory on every male, female, and child, master and servant (Bkh).

The month of Ramadzan* is that in which the Qur-án† was revealed, a guidance to men and clear proofs of the guidance and

*The revelation of the Holy Qur-án commenced in the month of *Ramadzan*, which is the ninth month of the Arabian year (Rz), hence the month of Ramadzan is particularly spoken of as being the month in which the Holy Qur-án was revealed. The root meaning of *Ramadzan* is *excessiveness of heat;* the month was so called because "when they changed the names of the months from the ancient language, they named these according to the seasons in which they fell, and this month agreed with the days of excessive heat" (LL. Bd). Some says that it is one of the names of Allah, for which, however, there is no reliable authority.

†Al *Qur-an* is the name by which the Holy Book revealed to the Prophet Muhammad—peace and the blessings of Allah be upon him!—is known, and by this name the Holy Book is frequently mentioned in the Divine revelation The word is an infinitive noun from the root *qara-a*, which signifies primarily *he collected together the things* (LA, TA-LL). The secondary significance of the root-word is *reading* or *reciting* a book, the word being applied to reading or recitation because in reading letters and words are joined to each other in a certain order (Rgh). The name *Qur-án* really refers to both the root-meaning, for on the one hand it signifies *a book in which are gathered together* all the Divine Books, a distinction to which the Qur-án itself lays claim in 98 : 4 and elsewhere (Rgh); on the other it means *a book that is or shouldbe read*, the Holy Qur-án being *the book* "that has been truly described as the most widely read book in existence" (*En.Br.*). The commentators have pointed out thirty-one different names under which the Holy Qur-án is spoken of in the revelation itself, the most important of these being *Al-Kitab*, or *the Book*, and *Az-Zikr*, or *the Reminder*.

the distinction ;‡ therefore whoever of you is present in the month, he shall fast therein, and whoever is sick or upon a journey, then (he shall fast) a (like) number of other days ; Allah desires ease for you, and He does not desire for you difficulty, and (He desires) that you should complete the number and that you should exalt the greatness of Allah for His having guided you and that you may give thanks.

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‡There are three statements made here regarding the Holy Qur-án ; firstly, that it is a guidance for all men, and that therefore it contains teachings which are suitable for the various classes and grades of men in different countries and ages ; secondly, that it contains comprehensive arguments of the guidance, thus demonstrating the truth of what it asserts ; and thirdly, that in addition to the arguments it affords a clear distinction, separating the truth from the falsehood by making the faithful taste the fruits of faith and the rejecters the evil consequences of their rejection of truth. The battle of Badr, which is called *yaum-ul-furqan*, or *the day of distinction*, in 8 : 41, also took place in the month of Ramadzan.

And when My servants ask *you* concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should answer My call and believe in Me that they may find the right way.*

It is made lawful to you to go into your wives on the night of the fast; they are an apparel for you and you are an apparel for

*The connection of this verse with the previous and the following verses consists in the fact that fasting, which includes *shunning every sort of evil*, brings a man nearer to the fountain-head of purity, and the more a man is brought near to the Holy One, the more do his supplications find acceptance with his Master. Hence, it is related that in the month of Ramadzan the Holy Prophet exerted himself the greater in his prayers (Bkh), and induced his followers to do likewise (Muslim).

That the prayer of a devout suppliant is accepted is plainly stated here, but two points must be noted in connection with this subject. In the first place, there is an impression that the efficacy of prayer in some way interferes with resorting to practical means to attain an object, so that if this impression has produced a class of men who totally deny the efficacy of prayer,

them ;*(a)* Allah knew that you acted unfaithfully to yourselves, *(b)* so He has turned to you (mercifully) and removed from you (this burden); so now be in contact with them and seek

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it has also led others to think that by resorting to prayer a man may dispense with all external means for the attainment of his object Both these views are wrong, and opposed to the true doctrine of the efficacy of prayer as taught in Islam The fact is that there is an indissoluble connection between practical means and prayer. Any one who sets before himself the attainment of an object first looks for the practical means to achieve it, and endeavours to his utmost to find out the agencies by which he can possibly attain that end. In this search for means he has to apply all his faculties to the object before him, and to give his whole attention to the finding of those means which will secure his object. This deep reflection or will-power may be called a prayer in a certain sense. For when we strive hard in search of what is hidden from us and unknown to us, we really seek for guidance from a Higher Power from whom nothing is hidden in a language which is expressed by our very condition. It cannot be doubted that when, in search of a thing, the soul stretches itself out in true zeal and ardour to the Giver of all gifts, and finding itself weak and unable to attain the end by itself,

(a) See page 65.
(b) See page 65.

what Allah has ordained for you, and eat and drink until the whiteness of the day becomes distinct from the blackness of the night at

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seeks for light from the Higher Source, it is plunged in a prayerful meditation, and its condition then is truly that of one who prays to God. The difference is only this, that the truly wise, the holy men of God, pray with due respect to Him whom they recognize to be the Source of all blessings, and their supplications are based upon a clear knowledge ; while the prayer of those upon whose eyes a veil is cast is like wandering in darkness, and it takes the form of meditation and reflection. Thus those who neglect prayer in search of means and do not reflect well upon their course in a prayerful mood are as wrong as those who do not resort to practical means on account of their prayers.

Secondly, it should be borne in mind that the efficacy of prayer does not mean that every object for which a man prays to the Divine Being should be immediately attained. This is made clear by the Holy Qur-án itself : "Him you will call upon, so He clears away that for which you pray if He pleases" (6 : 41) ; so that every object prayed for may not be attained. And again; "And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits" (v. 155) ; so that trials and hardships must be

dawn,* then complete the fast till night, and have not contact with them while you keep

undergone even by the faithful, and they must be prepared to suffer every kind of loss. But just as the efficacy of a medicine cannot be denied because it does not prove efficacious in all cases, so the efficacy of prayer cannot be denied on this ground.

Footnote (*a*) p. 63. This description of the mutual relations of husband and wife, and the mutual comfort they find in and the protection they afford to each other, is unsurpassed in beauty.

Foot note (*b*) p. 63. All that the reports narrated in connection with this verse show is that the Muslims at first thought that it was illegal to go in to their wives, even at night-time, on the days during which they kept fasts, but this practice, which, according to AbM, was adopted from the Christian (Rz), was, at any rate, according to the unanimous opinion of all commentators, not based on any Quranic revelation, the only revelation on this point being the one given in this verse, which pointed out the error of the view and removed the rigour under which the Muslims had placed themselves.

**Khait* originally means *thread*, but is not limited to that use. The *Khait alraqbah* (lit. *the thread of the neck*) means *the spinal cord of the neck* (S, Q-LL). And *Khait Minassubah* is also said to signify *a tint*

to the mosques ;* these are the limits of Allah, so do not go near them. Thus does Allah make clear His communications for men that they may guard (against evil).

And do not swallow up your property among yourselves by false means, *neither* seek to gain access thereby to the judges, so that you may swallow up a part of the property of men wrongfully while you know †

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of the dawn (TA-LL). Hence you say, *Tabayyanal Khait minal Khait i.e , The night became distinct from the day* (TA-LL). Hence *Alkhait alabyaz* signifies *the whiteness of the dawn* and *Alkhait alaswad* means *the blackness of the night* (LL) ; so here the break of the dawn is meant. after which no food or drink should be taken till sunset.

*By this is meant those who cut themselves off from all worldly connections during the last ten days of the month of Ramadzan, passing day and night in mosques. This practice is known as *I'tikaf*. But it is voluntary and not obligatory.

† The injunction to abstain from illegally taking other men's property is a fitting sequel to the injunction relating to fasting for by fasting a man abstains from using what he has a legal right to, simply in obedience

Selection from Bukhari.

The following on the subject of fasting has been culled from Bukhari, the most reliable book of the Prophet's traditions :—

1. When the month is that of Ramadzan, the gates of Heaven are made wide open, and Satan is bound in chains.

2. Commence fasting after seeing the new moon of Ramadzan, and cease fasting after seeing the new moon of Shawwal. If it is cloudy, fast for thirty days.

3. Says Abdullah bin Abbas :—"Holy Prophet was foremost of all in doing good to others, but during the Fasting month his generosity was even greater."

4. One who abandons not deception and telling lies, then Allah does not need his keeping himself from eating and drinking. Allah says: "Every one does good deeds for himself, but he fasts for My (God's) sake, and I alone can reward him."

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to Divine commandments. Fasting, in fact, enables a man to control his passions, and once the passions are mastered, the greed for illegally acquiring what belongs to others will also vanish.

5. Fasting shields from sin. When fasting, let no one speak foul, nor let him be boisterous. If he hears any one speaking foul to him, or using force against him, let him content with saying : " I am fasting."

6. If there be one unmarried, and is in fear of his yielding to evil passion, let him fast.

7. Let none fast on the day or two days preceding the month of fasting. But let one fast who is in the habit of fasting on a certain day, which happens to come before the month of Ramadzan.

8. In Qur-án *Khait-alabyaz* means the light of dawn, and *Khait-alaswad* means the darkness of the night.

9. Let no one cease eating his early morning meal when he hears Bilal calling to prayer.

Hazrat Bilal, a companion of the Holy Prophet, used to call to prayer. Sometimes he gave the call for morning prayer before time, which induced some to begin their fast ; hence the saying.

10. To partake the early morning meal (before fasting) is *mustahab* (desirable), not *wajib* (obligatory).

11. If one with fast pours water in his nose which passes down the throat, and he cannot emit it, his fast is not broken.

12. Feeling like sea-sickness does not break the fast, as something is discharged, not taken in.

13. The fast is broken by that which is swallowed, not by that which is given out.

14. When the night turns its back on this side, *i.e.* the east, and when day turns its back on this side, *i.e.* the west, and the sun sets, it is the time of breaking the fast.

FASTS OTHER THAN THOSE OF THE RAMADZAN.

1. Says Lady Aisha: The Holy Prophet did not fast in any month more than in that of Sha'ban (besides Ramadzan), and used to fast during the whole of this month. He used to say: 'Do good to the extent of your ability only."

2. Says Abdullah bin Aud bin As: "Holy Prophet addressed him, saying: 'Abdullah, I have heard you fast in the day, and spend the night standing in prayers. Do not do to such an extent. Do keep fasts, and give yourself relief from it as well. Say prayers, but do sleep as well; for your body and your eyes have a right (to be properly taken care of) on you, your wife and your guests have claims on you. Fast not more than three days in one month, for every good deed is rewarded tenfold. The Prophet added: 'Fast like Prophet David, and do not excel him in this.' 'How did he fast?' I asked. 'He fasted on alternate days,' was his reply."

3. Let none of you fast on Fridays, excepting when you are fasting on the two days, *viz.*, the one preceding and the other following it.

4. Holy Prophet forbade fasting on Id-ul-Fitr and Id-ul-Adzha days.

Lailat-ul-Qadr.

1. Seek for it in the odd nights of the last ten nights of the Ramadzan.

2. Holy Prophet went into I'tikaf—during the last ten days of Ramadzan.

3. One may go into I'tikaf even for a night.

4. A wife may see her husband in I'tikaf (and no more).

Poor Rates.

Every Muslim is expected to take stock of his savings once a year, and has to disburse $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of this as "alms." Charity takes two different forms in Islam. One sort is optional and the other compulsory. The last named is called "Zakát," the expenditure of which is not permissible to the payer himself. The "Zakát" has to be paid into a fund under the supervision of a committee, who make use of it for eight different purposes as laid down in the Qur-án in this wise:—"*Alms are only for the poor and the needy, and the officials (appointed over) them, and those whose hearts are made incline to truth and the ransoming of captives, and those in debt and in the way of Allah*": An ordinance from Allah, and Allah is Knowing, Wise (9 : 60).

The expression "in the way of God," which is the translation of "Fi Sabilillah" in the text, in the above verse signifies the dissemination of Islám and its truths to the non-Muslims. Similarly the fourth item of the disbursement of "zakát" refers to another aspect of Islamic propaganda. "Those whose hearts are made to incline to truth" are those who come with their adhesion to Islam. Their conversion to the faith makes them an object of persecution, and sometimes deprives them of the comfort they have been used to. A portion of the "zakat" should go to guard the interest of and secure happiness to these new members of the Muslim fraternity. Thus the verse clearly lays a duty on every Muslim to devote the quarter of his "zakat" in the spread of Islam. Beside "zakat" other alms are undefinable. In the words of the Holy Prophet: "From giving a smile to one in distress, to devoting everything dear to you in the cause of humanity" is optional charity.

The provisions of old-age pensions, parish relief measures and other similar means of

saving indigent members of a society from the ravages of poverty and want are but replicas of Islamic provisions of poor law.

It was Islam alone before all other religions of the world which systematized "alms" and gave charity the prestige and form of an institution. When asked what was the ultimate aim of "zakat," Holy Propht Muhammad replied that it was a means whereby the rich had to give something out of their opulence for the help of those in need. Hence it is that by means of prayer, fasting, and alms, a Muslim, gives up for the help and succour of others all that does belong to him lawfully. In this respect Islam is a wonderful system indeed.

I have pointed it out above that men's undue attachment to their worldly possessions, their relations and other objects, have been the fertile source of all manner of disorder in the world. To adequately meet this abuse, the tenet of pilgrimage is laid down. Under this a Muslim has to undertake once in his life a journery to Makka. He learns through undergoing all the hardships of such a long, arduous journey

how it is to be deprived of the company of those near and dear to him. At some distance from the Holy Temple of the Lord all pilgrims have to divest themselves of their ordinary apparel and to don a uniform which is same for all. One sheet covers the upper body and the other the legs; and whatever may be the status of the votary, the uniformity of the attire makes them all one and equal. In 1914 I visited Makka to perform the pilgrimage, and what I saw there produced an everlasting effect on my mind. My imagination went back to olden days when more than five thousand years ago the "Father of nations" found himself standing under the sacred walls of the first* house for the worship of

*Most surely the First House appointed for men is the one at Bekka (Makka), blessed and a guidance for the Nations.—THE QUR-AN, ch. iii. : 95. In this verse the shrine at Makka has been spoken of as the First House made on earth for the worship of God. In the introduction to his Life of Muhammad, Sir William Muir says as follows: "Deodorus Seculus, writing about half a century before our era, says of Arabia washed by the Red Sea, 'There is in this country a temple greatly revered by the Arabs." These words must refer to the

Makka. Abraham* had gone there under the order of God to leave his wife Hagar and their baby Ishmael in the valley of sunburnt sand and dry, naked rocks, without any sign of verdure to relieve the wearied eye of the traveller for hundreds of miles. Though promised that a

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Holy House of Makka, for we know of no other which ever commanded such universal homage . . . Tradition represents the Ka'ba as from time immemorial the scene of pilgrimage from all quarters of Arabia: from Yeman and Hadhramaut; from the shores of the Persian Gulf, the desert of Syria, and the distant environs of Hira and Mesopotamia, men yearly flocked to Makka. So extensive a homage must have had its beginnings in an extremely remote age.

*The story of Ishmael and Hagar's casting forth as given in Genesis is substantially true, though its description, *viz.* Abraham's sending her forth with bread and a bottle of water as if she were going to settle in the next village cannot be accepted as true. Sarah could not be satisfied with such expulsion of her rival. The Arab tradition representing Abraham as coming with Hagar and Ishmael to the place where Makka now is, is quite independent of the Bible statement, and the two taken together justify us in drawing the conclusion to the truth of the Arab tradition.—Muhammad Ali in his English Translation of the Qur-án.

mighty nation should be raised through the baby* in the wilderness, the ruggedness of the place all around, with no prospect of sustenance, filled the mind of the father with grief. His heart began to melt, and its outpouring assumed the shape of a prayer in the following words of the Qur-án.

و اذ قال ابراهيم رب اجعل هذا البلد امنا واجنبنى وبنى
ان نعبد الاصنام -

And when Abraham said : My Lord ! make this city secure, and save me and my sons from worshipping idols :

رب انهن اضللن كثيرا من الناس فمن تبعنى فانه منى
ومن عصانى فانك غفور رحيم -

My Lord ! Surely they have led many men astray : then whoever follows me, he is surely of me, and whoever disobeys me, Thou surely art Forgiving, Merciful :

ربنا انى اسكنت من ذريتى بواد غير ذى زرع عند بيتك
المحرم ربنا ليقيموالصلوة فاجعل افدة من الناس تهوى اليهم
وارزقهم من الثمرات لعلهم يشكرون - ربنا انك تعلم ما نخفى

*Gen. 21 : 18.

وما نعلن - وما يخفى على الله من شيء في الارض ولا في السماء - الحمد لله الذى وهب لى على الكبر اسمعيل و اسحق - ان ربى لسميع الدعاء -

O our Lord ! surely I have settled a part of my offspring in a valley, unproductive of fruit, near Thy Sacred House, Our Lord ! that they may keep up prayer ; therefore make the hearts of some people yearn towards them and provide them with fruits ; haply they may be grateful :

رب اجعلنى مقيم الصلوة ومن ذريتى - ربنا و تقبل دعا - ربنا اغفرلى ولوالدى و للمومنين يوم يقوم الحساب

O our Lord ! surely Thou knowest what we hide and what we make public, and nothing in the earth nor anything in heaven is hidden from Allah (16 : 34).

A prayer most typical of its kind in demanding realization of impossibilities. Prayers for achievements within our reach supply no proof of their efficacy even if granted. But a prayer for things beyond human means, presenting insurmountable difficulties for their attainment, becomes on its acceptance a real sign of the Great Hearer and His powers ; and

such was the prayer of Abraham. He settled his family in a valley most uncultivable and unproductive in its nature, and which is so till to-day, and yet he prays to have his "sons of the deserts" provided with fruits to live upon. A land with nothing in it to invite a visit from a neighbour, or to tempt the greed of the invader. There were no natural resources for the profiteers of the world to exploit and interfere with its inviolability, and yet Abraham wishes to see it converted into a centre of the world. "Make the hearts of the people yearn towards the people of the land" is his prayer. A land of sterility, with nothing in it to invite light from without, was sure to be the seat of ignorance and idolatry, but the old father wishes to see his sons secure from worshipping idols. A prayer bordering on impossibilities for its fulfilment, but addressed to One with whom impossibility is actuality, and improbability a reality. And in this we find a strong proof of the Supreme Existence

These words of Abraham not only remained without their fulfilment for thousands of years, but, on the other hand, they witnessed the

accomplishment of their very opposite through the actions of his children, who became proverbial for their idolatry and ignorance. But the words were prophetic, and could not fail to produce their effect. The time was coming when the stone which the builders rejected should become the head of the corner, and the kingdom of God should be taken from a nation and given to a nation bearing the fruit thereof.* The hour came when the Lord "shined forth from Mount Paran.† Muhammad, the last of the prophets (peace be upon him), appeared at Makka. Under Divine inspiration he reminded his countrymen of this prayer of their forefather brought to them through tradition, and gave them the good tidings of its fulfilment at his hand. And have I not seen its proof this day a few years ago, when I went to perform pilgrimage to Makka ?—A land till now unproductive of any fruit feeds its children to-day with fruits from the four corners

*Matt. 21 : 42, 43

†The Lord came from Sinai and rose up from Sier (Mount of Olives) unto them, he shined forth from Mount Paran (Makka).—Deut. 33 : 2.

of the world; a land with no natural beauty to cause attraction has become the centre of nations. "Make the hearts of some people yearn towards them" was the desire of Abraham; and does not every Muslim, located wherever he may be in the four corners of the world, yearn for a visit to Makka and bring with him fruits of the world to feed the children of Abraham? Take these words of Abraham as a longing of the heart of Muhammad; and if you find them fulfilled, do they not prove the existence of the Mighty Hand which knows how to bring together facts and factors to make the wish expressed to Him in prayer a reality? "Save my sons from worshipping idols" was another desire of the forefather; and was not the House of God purged of idolatry with a success unique in history with one stroke of the Divine hand? Leave apart that coarse idolatry of the past days in the world, have not these denizens of the deserts, and with them the whole Muslim world, been saved the disgrace of bowing down even before that refined idolatry which receives homage from cultured West in the twentieth

century of civilization and culture? "I have settled my offspring near Thy Sacred House, O Lord, that they may keep up prayer," says Abraham; and the only man in the whole world who has made the institution of prayer to prosper for ever is his son Muhammad. Jesus desired to make prayer a spiritual diet when he said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." And lo! his followers in the West care more for bread than for prayer, as observes General Gordon of Khartoum. But Muhammad could actualize what the Nazarene Prophet was theorizing. He enjoined upon his followers to minister to their soul five times a day before ministering to their inner man, and is it not a matter of wonderment that the sacred shrine at Makka is the only place in the whole world which "keeps up prayer" for twenty-four hours? I have visited churches and synagogues, I have seen Hindu temples and Buddhist shrines; in short, I have been to different houses of worship, including Muslim mosques. They are open for worship, and they remain closed for some time in the day. But go

to Makka, and you will find the Sacred House always crowded with people "on knees and in prostration." To satisfy my curiosity during my brief visit to Makka I chose almost all the hours of the day and night of my sojourn there to visit and remain in the shrine, and I do not remember a moment when I could find the sacred place without its worshippers at prayer or making *tawaaf*. Even the shrine at Madina closes its doors on its votaries between eleven o'clock in the night and three in the morning; but the House at Makka keeps its arms open day and night to receive its votaries, and this not in the days of Pilgrimage alone, but for the whole year

These yearnings of Abraham's mind, which furnish us with a strong proof not only of the efficacy of prayer but also of the existence of the Most High, however, disclose another longing desire of Abraham. A Father of nations, whose descendants, as promised by God, had to inhabit the four corners of the world, would naturally wish to see the different branches of his stock cemented into one universal

brotherhood, with a possible centre to meet each other. "O Lord! make the hearts of some people yearn towards them (people of Makka) and provide them with fruits," were the words of the sacred Patriarch, who wished to see Makka as a rallying centre of various nations. The valley most unproductive of fruits feeds its children with fruits of the world; and where lies a Muslim heart, even in California and Brazil, in Australia and Japan, which is not yearning to-day towards the sacred shrine at Makka? What a wonderful sign for a sceptic mind to ponder over. In 1914 I saw nations swarming from the four corners of the world to the mother of cities, as Makka has been styled from time beyond history. It was the 9th of Dhul-Hijja the last month of Hijra when some 400 thousand of people who had come there from China, Philippines, Malaya, Burma, India, Afghanistan, Baluchistan, Persia, Turkestan, Mesopotamia, Russia, Syria, Egypt, Turkey, Abyssinia, and even from England—myself, with two friends—left Makka for the village of Mina, a place six miles from Makka,

where, as the tradition goes, Ishmael was brought to be sacrificed in the name of God by Abraham. We passed the night there, and after saying our morning prayer we started for the elevated plains called "*Arafat*"—the place of Muslim pilgrimage—at a farther distance of six miles from Mina, and this we had to reach before the sun attained its meridian. A splendid cavalcade which could extend over more than twenty miles, consisting of camels, horses, mules, and asses, conveying the pilgrims to their destination, sprinkled with vehicles and coaches here and there, while more than half the number were on foot. They differed in language, colour, and race; they belonged to diverse ranks aad grades, but all fastened in the strong cord of fraternity and saturated with the true spirit of the belief in the Unity of God and the equality of man. Descent and wealth everywhere claim respect and distinction for their owners if they are known to others, but rich costumes and expensive clothing can command awe and respect even amongst strangers. But the Divine wisdom which wanted to

demolish all man-made boundaries of differences in order to create universal brotherhood in man could not suffer even that in that levelling atmosphere of Makka in the days of pilgrimage. Every pilgrim, no matter what his rank, a king or a plebeian, had to divest himself of his raiment before stepping into the holy precincts of Makka and clothe himself in two white sheets called *Ihram*—one to cover the legs and the other for the rest of the body—thus destroying the last sign of distinction. Picture to yourselves hundreds of thousands of men and women belonging to different ranks and grades of society, clad in one and the same garb of humility, free from all signs of distinction, passing days and nights for months and weeks on terms of purest equality in the service of one God. And what was their form of address to each other? Father or mother, sister or brother, son or daughter, as the age and sex allowed. Fair faces with all the charms of their feminine beauty, but no veil to cover them, and yet as safe from stare and glare as when behind the screen, all eyes there being

bent down and sealed on the feet of their owners, with minds free from lust and evil desire. One thing which left an everlasting impression on my mind was the chivalrous and orderly behaviour which I observed in that vast flood of humanity. Men, women, and children were hastening to the appointed place which they had to reach within a limited time, mostly on foot, yet there was not the slightest sign of pushing, elbowing, or shouldering. Ladies and children first was the rule of the day which I saw scrupulously observed even by the most unpolished coming from the heart of Central Africa.

There was, however, one thing which my eyes remained searching full three days of the gathering but could not find—that ubiquitous person who graces with his presence every assembly, religious or secular, in the whole world. I mean the policeman. To my surprise I was told that the gentleman has never been in requisition in the days of Hajj (pilgrimage) from the very beginning. Does the kingdom of God come from heaven, I wonder, in these days,

and bring that heterogeneous assembly under its peaceful arms? Do all criminal and evil propensities in our nature become suppressed, and we become angels for the time being, that the authorities at Makka can so easily dispense with the services of this guardian of the peace and a necessary asset to all order? Interpret it in whatever light you will, but my searching eyes failed to find any evidence of any form of evil in the commonest form even. I have been to fairs, religious and secular, Muslim and non-Muslim, in different parts of India, I have been to different places of gathering in the Western world as well, but I found no place without a representative of the police force, and their very absence in the holy place in these three days of pilgrimage showed to me that religion, after all, could make angels of men and create that spirit of universal brotherhood and human fellowship which can make sin unknown, as it consists in sacrificing our own needs in the interests of others. This can cement conflicting elements into one harmonious whole. If such spirit works in man, it is sure to banish evil,

All criminal acts and wrong deeds are the shadow of our desire to possess things belonging to others. Covetousness lies at the root of all wrong actions. It prompts all offence and germinates all crimes. Could a desire to possess others' belongings, even in the slightest form, find its way into the mind of one who thinks his first duty to give his own needful for the benefit of others? This is the basic principle of the whole ethical code of Islam, as the Book of God says: "You cannot attain righteousness unless you spend for the benefit of others of what you love to possess." That was the spirit which I found permeating the atmosphere which must kill sin, no matter even if it be original, and crush the head of the dragon without going to the cross. Is not a Muslim therefore justified in thinking that the holy pilgrimage to Makka washes off his past sins? If a spirit like the one I have mentioned and saw becomes prompted in man and takes better of him even for a short time, has he not been purged of his past sins and enabled to enter into new life of righteousness? I wish we

Muslims could continue in cultivating that spirit which I experienced in those three most eventful of my life, and the millennium of the days of the Prophet would again be restored to us. Yes, I saw the kingdom of heaven established again at the foot of the Mount of Paran, and it reminded me of, and strengthened my belief in, the coming of the same in the days of the Prophet in Arabia. Can you imagine a government or a rule in any country without having police or other functionaries to keep order? But the world saw that regime in the days of the Prophet at Medina, when crime became extinct, and even those who unfortunately fell prey to some evil propensity could not help making a clean breast of it before the Holy Prophet within a day or two of its occurrence, though unobserved by any other eye. Omnipresence of God became a living reality in the Companions of the Prophet which dispensed with police investigation. No one was needed to arrest a culprit. The offender himself was his own captor. Falsehood was unknown, and therefore no case needed this modern rigmarole of judicial procedure. No one stood in need of

any evidence to substantiate his proof. There were no allegations of facts or joinder of issues. Statement of charge or claim in their true colour on one side and admission or confession on the other. Thus God seemed to rule everywhere, and "Thy kingdom come"—the dream and prayer of Jesus—became reality at the hand of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Sallallah alaihe wa-sallam).

Enough has been written here to show the various institutions of Islam styled as its pillars and are chiefly meant to create cosmopolitan spirit in the Muslim mind and purge it of all such attachments that create selfishness which is really the root of all sins. Through the institution of Hajj the narrow patriotism of our days loses some of its worst aspects, and our feelings of love of our country become softened and regulated. Briefly, to revert to my original theme, Islam aims at the establishment of real peace in the world, and to destroy every trace of all that tends to weaken such aim. Islam tries to show not only what real peace is,

but also what constitutes and brings forth real peace. The recognition of "thine and mine" which brings forth happiness and comfort, also deters its proper course. Some remedy was needed to chasten it into something noble, and divest it of its abuse.

Islam is the gospel of peace promised by Jesus to his followers and not the religion started by Paul and followed by the Church at the expense of the teachings of Jesus. The war just finished which set fire to the whole world is an eloquent illustration of my assertions, and it would not be out of place if I produce here my sermon delivered at the Mosque, Woking at the Id-ul-Fitr of 1337 Hijra on the subject.

Gospel of Peace

May the Lord of all nations bring to an end this horrible Armageddon, and from its ashes work out a universal and everlasting peace; not an armed peace as we had before, or a temporary armistice to enable the devil of scientific barbarism to gather force again to extirpate humanity and to devastate the world, but a

peace which will consist in the negation of all those sordid and selfish principles of life which from time to time have caused the unsheathing of the sword in the past history of the world. May the Preserver and Sustainer of all humanity bring us a peace with such noble and high principles of conduct that may enable every man to claim liberty and freedom, as his birth-right, and to consider every country as his motherland! I mean by peace the establishment of that comfort of body, mind, and soul which religion from God has come from time to time to substantiate on this planet of ours; a peace which is synonymous with the Kingdom of God, and which has visited us from the days of the Prophets—Moses, Jesus, and others—and which found its last shape in the concluding days of our Holy Prophet Muhammad—peace be upon them all—when all kinds of selfishness were negatived; when people, inspired with a new sense of humanity, merged their individual consciousness into a cosmic one; when everything that means "Mine" was sacrificed at the altar of "Thine"; when jealous competition

and evil rivalry became unknown and gave their place to devotion and sacrifice for the cause of humanity. In order to secure an everlasting peace, the world again needs a wider outlook of humanity which demolishing all barriers of class, country, or race, may weld once more, as it did in the days of Muhammad (peace be upon him), all the conflicting elements of humanity into one harmonious whole. Thirteen days more will complete the fourth year of the day which ignited this world-wide conflagration that has not only consumed everything best in humanity but has brought all that was worst in man to the surface. Man has incarnated himself in the devil or devil in man; all landmarks of civilization have been demolished and all signposts of humanity have disappeared. Even a Nero should feel ashamed of that desolation which has overtaken rich lands and beautiful cities. One fails even to imagine the horror of that cruel vandalism which knows no distinction between the military and the civilian, which makes no distinction between the battlefield or the hospital, whether

on land or on sea, which demolishes even the house of God, and brings those harmless souls to a sudden annihilation who on their penitent knees in a religious house are imploring the loving Father in Heaven to put an end to this manifestation of the devilry.

And this all—what an irony of fate!—in the exclusive realms of the Master who came to kill the devil, and who for his gentle teaching has rightly been called the Prince of Peace. Has not the Church got any power to reclaim her strayed flock and spare the world from this terrible fate? I am afraid not. If the Church was knee-deep in blood in mediæval days, one could understand on account of the darkest ignorance of those days. But what about the Church of the present day, when culture and theology go hand in hand? Have we not had to look to Germany in prewar days for what could be said best in exposition of religion? Has not the best of theology, as the Dean of St. Paul's said last year, come from the same side? But how the pulpit from the very same country has been manipulated by the lords of the war!

All pulpit utterances are military sermons and an attempt to justify measures adopted. The simple and unambiguous words of the Master, which were the real gospel of peace, have been distorted and given a wrong interpretation to further war ends. Unfortunately since the days of the Reformation the clerics have always enslaved the laity. But the Church is all the same everywhere, whether in the East or West. Religion more or less has all over the world been manipulated to help individual and political aims. The wolf in man has always tried to prowl about and pounce on the lamb in the garb of a shepherd. More human blood is said to have been shed in the name of religion by its self-motived votaries than in the name of any other human institution. Is it then surprising to find some advocates of materialism deprecating religion and calling it an institution of garbed cruelty and covered bloodshed, and therefore fit to be stamped out from the pale of humanity ?*

*Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum (Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura)*

But have they discovered a better plan and some safer scheme to bring millennium on the earth? Is not their own philosophy of life the chief cause of what we are suffering from in these terrible days? Is not the same superman of Nietzsche who would have his will executed regardless of consequences to others their ideal? Is it not the same sordid theory of the survival of the fittest which would not allow the unfit even to breathe on the earth of God, but to subserve to the self-motived interest of the fittest? The Lord of the War with his progeny has come forward in the front to establish his fitness and to bring every one down to his domineering feet. No, theories like these propounded by earthly philosophers will certainly not bring any good to us. Religion, and only religion in its pristine purity, is our salvation; but not the religion of the Church, whether in the East or in the West. In the case of the latter, the best of her exponents have declared their dissatisfaction with it. Even before the war they did feel the necessity of revising the whole superstructure of the Church

of Christ. The war again has shown the hollowness of the system and the various utterances which from time to time have come from within the Church during the last four years simply come to endorse our opinion. Dean Inge looks for the appearance of another prophet to save the situation. Interesting as this statement is, it is not complimentary to the body he belongs to. But the Church is the same wherever we go. What a hopeless outlook and heart-breaking prospect ! But we need not go to this self-constituted warden of religion. Let us go humbly to those Masters of Humanity who received religion of God from God Himself and became His best spokesmen to His creatures, *viz.* the Prophets of the world. Let us sit humbly at the feet of Abraham, Ishmael, Jacob, and their descendants. Let us approach Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, and other prophets of the world in a true Muslim spirit and accept them as our guide to work out our salvation out of this humanity-killing catastrophe.

And what is the Muslim spirit ? Allow me

to enlighten you on the question in the very words of the Qur-án, the Gospel of Islam. The Book, in order to define the Muslim attitude towards the prophets of the world, enjoins me to say the following as the formula of my faith:—

"Say: We believe in God, and in what has been sent down to you, (Muhammad) and in what has been sent to Abraham, Jacob, Ishmael, Isaac, and their descendants. We believe in what has been given to Moses and Jesus and all the other prophets of the world (raised in any part or corner of it). We (Muslims) make no distinction between prophet and prophet, as we are submissive to Allah, Who has sent them to us."

This is the Muslim attitude, and is it not sufficient to bring conflicts in the province of religion nearer to harmony? A Muslim has to submit to the will of the Most High, and he must go to all His messengers wherever they may be to accept His revelation. Do not think that any man or any tribe or any race is a chosen one of God. All are equally His

children. If my Allah knows no distinction in dispensing physical sustenance, He is more impartial in dispensing spiritual nourishment. Go to all these prophets, again I say, and you have the true gospel of life which can only save humanity from this demon of selfishness.

I need not read to you long homilies and sermons on the subject. I would refer you to that noble aim of religious life which has been depicted in one word by all the prophets in different accents and stresses, and that is " to walk humbly with the Lord," " to imbue ourselves with Divine attributes," as the Prophet of Islam says, and thus to be able to say in the words of Jesus, " I and my Father are one." By reaching that stage of spirituality we do not become God, nor any one has been so. See those men whom ignorance and credulity has clothed with divinity. Have they not shown ordinary human infirmities? What of you, friends, as some of you have been taken up with the queer notion of being equal to God? To think so is only blasphemy. When we

say, "I and my Father are one," we mean we have killed our own ego, we destroy our own individuality, we subordinate our will to that of the Highest will, we conduct ourselves in absolute submission to Him, and in this Muslim (submissive) attitude we become at one with Him. Remember one who said, "I and my Father are one." He also said, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14 : 28). "Why callest thou me good ? none is good save one, that is God."

This was the sole object of religion given to us by Jesus and others. But unfortuuately some of these great men which through their complete submission to God reached this exalted position, and through their example showed us our capacity and our limit of progress, have been deified. If Jesus said, "I and my Father are one," if Krishna in moments of his ecstasies proclaimed, "I am Bhagwan (God)," and if only a few centuries ago one of the humblest of Muhammad's devotees, in a similar state of mind, startled the world by saying, "Ana-l Haq," "I am the Truth (God)," and

showed miracles after miracles sufficient to clothe him with Divinity in the eyes of credulity, these great men did not claim any Divinity for themselves, nor did they refer to any exclusive achievement. They spoke in their representative character as men. Each of them was Son of Man, and they showed the height of spirituality, which is accessible to every child of humanity. The world owes a great obligation to Muhammad, who extricated it from this gross ignorance when he made a world-wide announcement. "God says," he said, "when a man utterly submits himself to Me, I love him; and when I love him I become his eyes with which he sees, his ears with which he hears, his tongue with which he talks, and his hands with which he holds, and his legs with which he walks."

This is the Gospel which Muhammad brings in the name of Islam to humanity, and in it lies not only the realization of what may be called the highest ideal in religion, but on it, and exclusively on it, as I will show further, depends the salvation of the world for ever from

the cruel clutches of this Armageddon and the establishment of everlasting peace all over the world. Through the fulfilment of the law, as he himself admits, Jesus was enabled to say, "I and my Father are one." Through observing fully "Karam-Kand," which means submission to Divine commandment, Krishna could say, "I am Bhagwan." Muhammad—Peace be upon them all—had reached the topmost rung of the ladder, on which these Masters were climbing, but from his exalted position he tells you all "Ana Basharun mislukum,"—I am only a man like you. You are all physiologically equal; physical equality postulates spiritual equality. Jesus always styled himself as son of man; what was achieved by him is open to every other son of man. It has been said of us that we are after the image of God, image without a soul and spirit. Walk humbly with God as Jesus did and others did, and that image will become animated with the spirit of God Himself. And you will not only be able to give sight to the blind, to give hearing to the deaf, and, in short, to give life to

the lifeless, but you yourself will be Sons of Peace, and the Kingdom of God will descend upon you. But have you ever tried to realize what limbs and joints are of God; what kind of eye and ear He possesses, with what hands He holds things and dispenses them? If the Holy Prophet of Islam tells you, "Imbue yourself with Divine attributes," let me tell you on his behalf what are the attributes of the Most High. Open the Qur-án, and at its very outset the following four attributes are givenas the very first words of the opening chapter of the Qur-án: —"Alhamdo Lillahi Rabbil 'alamin Arrahman Arrahim Maliki Yaumiddin."

Rabbul Alamin—the Creator, the Provider, the Sustainer, and the Upbringer of all the worlds, of all the time and ages, and of all the races and nations, Whose bounties and gifts make no distinction between race and race and come to every one; Who in His dispensation acts as Rahman, the Beneficent Lord, Whose benevolence looks to the needs of every one, even before the need comes into existence. Does not every

atom in the universe bear eloquent testimony to these His two grand attributes? The earth with all its resources, He has made open to all, but it is man who would not allow his fellow-creatures to have an equal share in it with him. Is it not after all at the bottom of all human trouble? Had man put his humble foot in the great foot-prints of God which leave their impressions in bold writs on every span of land, wars would have ended, bloodshed finished, and criminality in all its shades have gone into exile. Be creatures of Rahman to others. Let your benevolence go to the need of every one gratuitously, without distinction of country, colour, and class, because so has been your Creator to you in His blessings, and the world would reach its millennium. His third attribute is "Rahim," Who out of His compassion comes with thousandfold reward for every action of man. Put one seed in the ground. You have tilled the ground and watered it properly, your labour cannot go beyond it. Wait for a few months only, and the blessings of God come in the form of a hundred grains of corn for your one grain.

Had the wretched sordidness of man left him to walk humbly with His Lord in this aspect of His Godhood, there would have been no trouble arising from the question of capital and labour. Is not capital sucking the very blood of labour and trying to take his pound of flesh from the bleeding breast of the workman ? The capitalists should have been thankful to God through their actions. Lip gratitudes carry no weight with the Lord. Their gratitude ought to have consisted in paying more to the labourers than they deserve, and in the long run the capitalists would not have been the losers.

But what about the wicked and the culprits? Evil has been as old as humanity. How to deal with them ? If they do not lead a godly life, should we keep silent and through these humanitarian principles, as one would say, provide to them a premium on license and wickedness ? I say, "No." Again I say, "Walk humbly with your Lord, Who is 'Maliki Yaumiddin," the Master of the Day of Requital and of the Day of Judgment. The Book of God, in

choosing the word "Malik," which means master or owner, has given us a very vivid and interesting insight into the dealing of the Lord with the delinquents. He has not been called here as a judge Who, bound with hard and fast rules of the law, is unable to show mercy to a sinner without taking any compensation for the sin—Who, in order to meet the ends of justice and to satisfy His merciful nature as well, looks for sacrifices and arranges vicarious atonements. No, friends, it is not so. This is neither justice nor mercy. Justice, at least, not to one who will have to atone for others; and mercy with compensation is no mercy, it is only business. Look at the innumerable gifts of God which encompass you all around, which are all undeserved and unmerited. Has He not shown His mercy, without compensation, that He needs it in the matter of remitting my sin? Think upon the meaning of *Malik*, *i.e.* "Owner." He is my Owner, and I, though a sinner, am His own property. Is not an owner deeply interested in the preservation of his property? Some features of the property he

may not like. He will try to reclaim it, but in a way which may not destroy it, and this is what Nature all around bears witness to. Every action which Nature takes for dismemberment of an organism is immediately followed by reconstruction. There is no absolute destruction. Decay and corruption in organisms demands the break-up of the frame, but this derangement is only for the rearrangement. Autumn comes not to destroy but to release the trunks of the trees of the refuse and what is unnecessary and to prepare them for fresh life. These are different forms of punishment coming from the hands of God, and they are quite characteristic of the Being whose interest in the creation is that of an owner in the thing owned. Do punish those who have violated the law, who are the spreaders of wickedness and sin. But not with a view to extirpate them, but with a a view to reclaim them to a better order.

You may say that I am dealing with impossibilities, and I am reading to you homilies of a visionary idealist. No, brethren. You are

quite capable of showing these Divine morals in your mode of life. They come from a Book which says: "La yukallifullaho nafsan illa wus'aha"—God never burdens any one beyond the extent of his power. No matter what may be the extent of our sordidness, no matter how engrossed we may be in our selfish ends, but all of us do exert these morals every day, though of course within limited area. We follow the attributes of Rabb, of Rahman, of Rahim, and of Malik. We are all or most of us blessed with families, we have children and babies; do we not provide them with everything they need, do we not nourish them and sustain them? Yes, we do; and in a metaphorical sense we are Rabb of our own children. Do we not look to their needs sometimes years before those needs come into existence? Have we not invested money in property, and in various other forms, to be used by our children when they will reach such and such age, and this all not in an obligatory way but gratuitously? By doing so we have stepped in the footprints of Rahman. These children, or sometimes your friends, do a

little thing to please you, and your reward comes hundredfold, and in doing so you are walking humbly with the Lord, Who is Rahim. And what about the mischievousness of your children? Would you punish them to death? Would you be inimical to them in your admonitions? Now you take a very hard rod, but in its exercise you are very soft, because your interest in them is that of an owner in the thing owned. We simply want a reclamation, and not annihilation. Thus you have acted as a true image of Rabb, Rahman, and Malik, no doubt within a limited area. Extend these limits for the exercise of these Divine morals to those who live beyond the pale of those who are near and dear to you; and this demand is not an impossibility. All this you do every day when you are inspired with a strong sense of patriotism. Your earnings do go to the nourishment, help, and need of those who can legitimately claim the charity of your patriotism; and this war at least has been in some sense a blessing. It has actualized all these morals. Look at your magistracy, how lenient they have become with

the delinquencies of those who fight for us, because we are interested in the preservation of our forces. Is it not the same "Malik-i-Yaumid-din" who is guiding the principles of punishment nowadays? What is wanting now is to extend the exercise of these Divine morals beyond the limits of patriotism and bring them to the benefit of those also who do not belong to your race, country, or class; and this again I say is not impossible. The war has supplied an occasion for the exhibition of these virtues. Have not more than thirty nations joined the cause of the Allies? You are doing the same to them as you could have done to your own countrymen. Have you not fought for Belgium? Does not your charity go to the Serbs? Have you not shed your blood for France? Whatever may be the motive of each nation at the back, but under the emergencies of the moment, more than half the world on one side, and the rest on the other, have sufficiently shown the capability of man to extend his sympathy and fellow-feeling to those belonging to other races, colours, and countries, and thus to some extent man is walking humbly

with the Lord in his attributes as Rabb, Rahman, Rahim, and Malik. These virtues one may style as virtues that come out of necessity, but try to cultivate them, and make a permanent asset of them for humanity. The present state of society, as the Premier said the other day, is a libel on Jesus; I say it is a libel on God and all His prophets, including Jesus. In future, the Premier says, every country will be of every man, and the earnings of every one shall go to the need of others. Then the Kingdom of God, I say, will descend on earth, as it did in the days of Muhammad. Angels will hover on earth with their pinions of blessings on us. The earth will see its promised millennium, and we will receive our real heritage, viz., God with man. We will soar on the borders of Divinity; and beyond that we cannot go. Those who think otherwise are deluded, and what they take for God in some cases is only evolved humanity. Divinity transcends even the limits of metaphor and similes, leave apart its actual realization. And even these holy precincts I am speaking about are not opened to the unworthy. The only qualification

which enables us to reach Divine borders is to walk humbly with God on the lines of benevolence and charity. Try to be true worshippers of Rabb, Rahman, Rahim, and Malik—to worship God, as Count Tolstoi says, is to desire what God desires, and He desires universal welfare. Exert yourself for universal welfare, and the door of Divinity will be opened to you. This is the first condition of a godly life; without it all your meditation and "sacred silence" is illusion. They are helpful, but with this condition precedent.

May God enable us to do so, and relieve the world from the calamity we have been drawn into through the sordid selfishness of man. Let us magnify our God and glorify Him in the words of our Prophet, and I ask my Muslim brethren to join me in saying, "Allaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar, la ilaha illallah Wallaho Akbar, Allaho Akbar, Walillah hilhamd" ("God is great, God is great; there is no deity but Allah. God is great, God is great, and all praise and glory is due to Him."

THE END.